

# There's More Than Meets the Eye



The Research and Principles that  
Shaped MCCS



## *A Mission Drawn From Maine Statute*

*"Foster community service and volunteerism that meets human and environmental needs in Maine."*

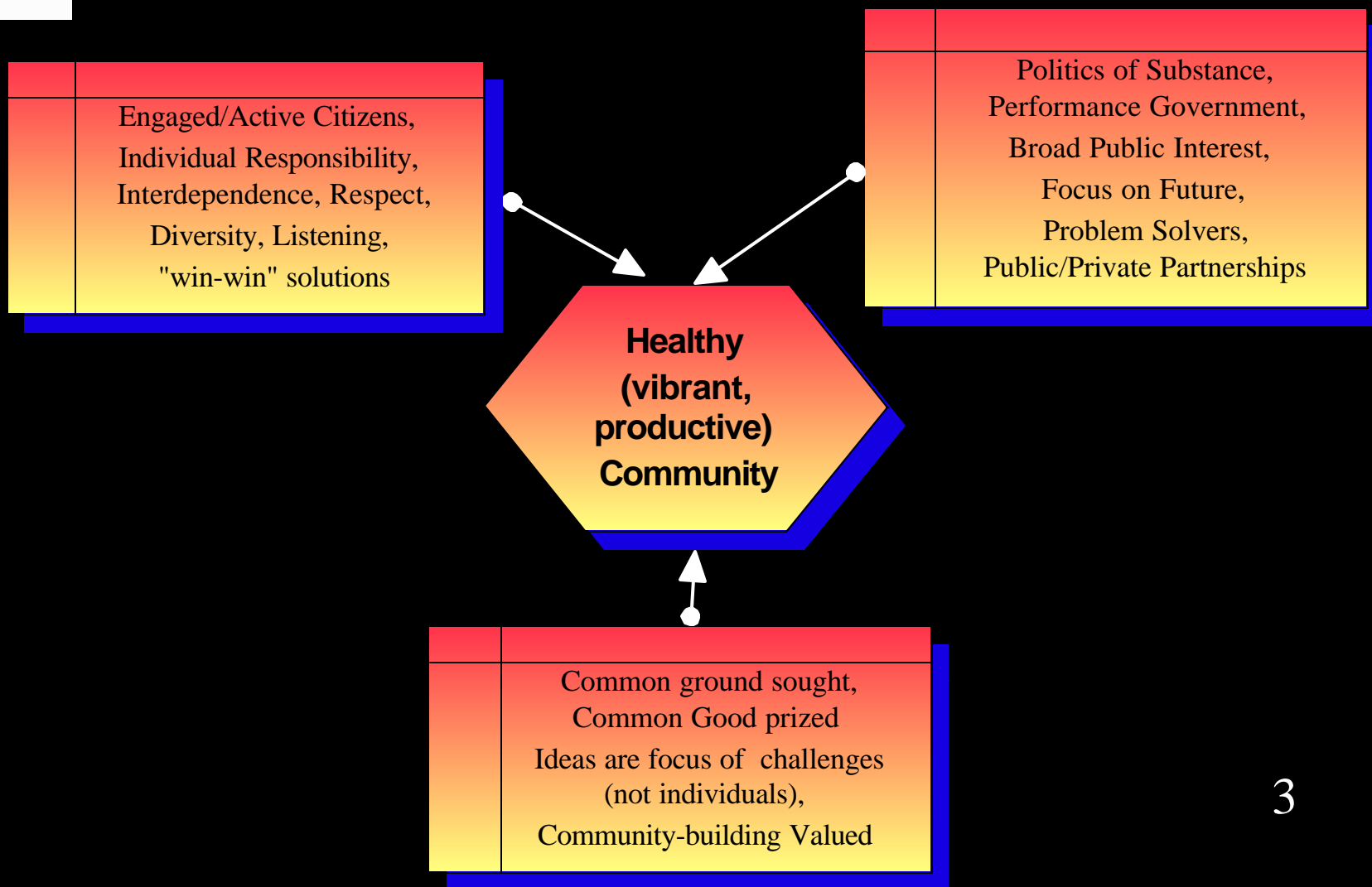
5MRSA, c.373, 7501:

- ✓ foster the State's ethic of community service and volunteerism as a means of meeting critical  
~ human, environmental, educational, and public safety needs;
- ✓ serve as the State's liaison regarding national and community service and volunteer activities;
- ✓ foster collaboration among service agencies;
- ✓ receive gifts and grants, implement statewide service programs and make subgrants



# A Vision Rooted in Research

*"Vibrant productive communities with involved responsible citizens."*





# Government As Community-Builder

*Fostering vibrant, productive communities*

Plays a central role in  
improving the lives of citizens  
as well as in piecing together  
solutions to major social, economic,  
environmental, and political challenges.

Government's Motivation?

- ~ Sustainable Communities
- ~ Vital Local Economies
- ~ Better Outcomes for ..... specific groups

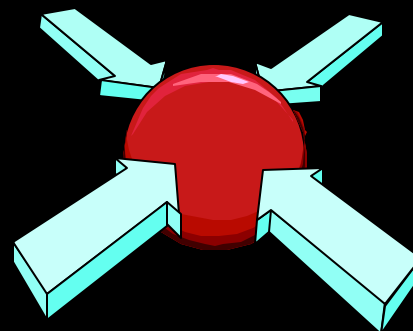
(3)



# The Roles of Effective Government

*"Vibrant, productive communities..."*

- ✓ Convener:  
bring groups together to work jointly
- ✓ Facilitator:  
help groups resolve conflicts and reach consensus
- ✓ Catalyst:  
make change happen
- ✓ Partner:  
combine Government resources with others'





# The Roles of Engaged Citizens

*"...with involved, responsible citizens."*

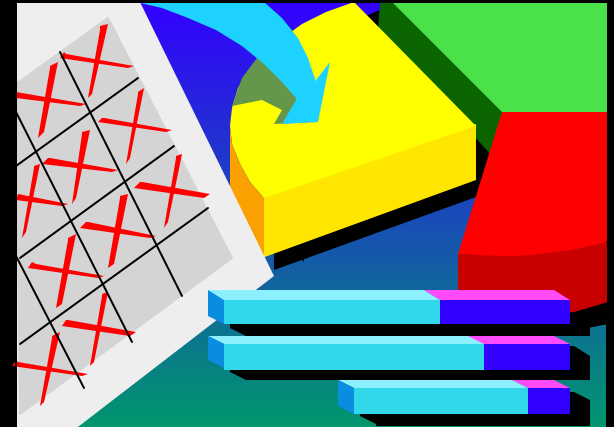
- ✓ Customers
  - ~ public services meet their needs
- ✓ Shareholders
  - ~ tax payments are investments in public services and assets
  - ~ expect government to produce results
- ✓ Issue framers
  - ~ build vision of the future
  - ~ identify acceptable strategies to get there
  - ~ serve as advisors, recommending adjustments





# Roles of Engaged Citizens (continued)

- ✓ Co-producers of services  
~ carry out public services/activities  
with government
- ✓ Service quality evaluators  
~ assess the performance of  
public services
- ✓ Independent "outcome trackers"  
~ monitor outcomes on a  
broad range of local issues





# Why Emphasize Volunteer Service?

Service ...

- ✓ a fundamental building block of civil society

*"To serve the Community is to Participate in the never-ending process of Community-building." (9)*

- ✓ cultivates as sense of personal and civic responsibility;

*"There is abroad in our land a ... notion that we do all that is required of us when we make profession of our faith in ... good citizenship and abstain from the commission of palpably unpatriotic sins." (5)*

*"Many leaders do not believe in the capacities of communities.... our roles as citizens [have been] traded in for the right to clienthood and consumer status."*





Service ...

- ✓ is a strategy for solving a range of community problems.

*"Community service empowers citizens to become problem solvers, provides them with the resources to serve, and establishes the mechanisms for them to identify and solve [local] problems before they become catastrophes." (9)*

- ✓ varies in intensity from part-time volunteerism to full-time paid service;

*"What the [community service] movement can provide is the coordination, facilitation, and support that is essential to sustain and fulfill the American voluntary impulse." (9)*



Service ...

- ✓ when it is well conceived and implemented, can be a cost-effective complement to the work of professionals.

*"Citizens are left out of the process [of solving problems] until the task becomes too great for the specialists to manage." (9)*

- ✓ includes a range of activities performed by different people using different means;
- ✓ is a lifelong habit that can be most easily acquired early in life;

*"Service has the potential to become the catalyst to develop the leaders the United States will need to prosper ..... It can empower people, young and old, and confirm their belief that they can made a difference in their own lives and in the future of this nation." (9)*



Service ...

- ✓ works best when it is community-led and government supported;

*"Community service recognizes both the limits of government solutions and the value of government resources." (9)*

- ✓ is a fundamental American tradition.

*"The people who put this country together were silversmiths, printers, planters, sailors, lawyers, merchants... a whole lot of ordinary working people who had a vision of how they wanted their country to be..*

*We still have a lot of work to do ..."* (4)



*Together, these Nine Traits of Service comprise the*

# Values and Convictions of the Maine Commission for Community Service

*and were formally adopted as such in March 2000.*



# References Cited

- Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 373, Sections 7501 et seq. *The Maine Commission for Community Service.*
- 2) 42 United States Code Annotated, *The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1990 (as amended through December 1999, P.L. 106-170)*
  - 3) Adams, Bruce (1997). *Leadership Collaboration Series: Building Healthy Communities*, Virginia: Pew Partnership for Civic Change
  - 4) Chapin, Harry. American musician, singer, and composer. 1942-1981
  - 5) Cleveland, (Stephen) Grover, 22nd and 24th President of the US (1898). *On Citizenship.*
  - 6) Epstein, P., Wray, L., Marshall, M. and Grifel, S. *Engaging Citizens in Achieving Results that Matter.*  
A paper for the American Society of Public Administration Symposium on Results-oriented Government. Published February 2000 by the Citizens League.
  - 7) McKnight, J.L. as quoted by Briand, M.K. (1997). *Building Deliberative Communities.* Virginia: Pew Partnership for Civic Change. pp 4-5.
  - 8) National Civic League and Annie E. Casey Foundation (1998). *Building Community: Exploring the Role of Social Capital and Government.* pp 6-19.
  - 9) National Women's Law Center and American Youth Policy Forum (1993). *Visions of Service.*



So, Now you wonder ...

*"What is a State Government Service Commission?"*

To explore the State/Federal government partnership .... go to

*"From State to State: The Role of State Commissions  
in the Federal/State Partnership"*

The Next MCCS Orientation Section

